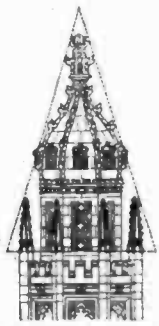
The same delicate and refined principle pervades Gothic turrets and Moslem minarets.



Four great angle Turrets of King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

Shaking Minarets of the Mosque at Ahmedabad.

While upon the subject of outline, the author cannot refrain from contradicting, as far as in him lies, the opinion put forth with regard to spires by Mr. Britton, in his exquisite work upon "The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury," (p. 74). "Although this spire is an object of popular and scientific curiosity, it cannot be properly regarded as beautiful or elegant, either in itself, or as a member of the edifice to which it belongs. A may-pole or a poplar tree, a pyramid or a plain single column, can never satisfy the eye of an artist, or be viewed with pleasure by the man of taste. Either may be a beautiful accessory, or be pleasing in association with other forms. The tall thin spire is also far from being an elegant object. Divest it of its ornamental bands, crockets, and pinnacles, it will be tasteless and formal, as we may see exemplified in the pitiful obelisk in the centre of Queen-square, Bath; but associate it with proportionate pinnacles, or other appropriate forms, and, like the spire of St. Mary's Church in Oxford, and that of the south-western tower of Peterborough Cathedral, we are then gratified."

Very odd reasoning this, and quite at variance with the in-born feelings of nearly every native of Christian lands. The author would have deemed it unnecessary to refute such a passage if it had been put forth by any other than an antiquarian gentleman to whose taste and perseverance we owe so much.

By the denuding process mentioned by Mr. Britton, every thing accounted beautiful in the world might be rendered both uncouth and ugly: thus, take away the features of the finest head and face, you have remaining a raw skull: take away the sauce garniture and cookery of a feast, and you leave but crude flesh, raw vegetables, and a few other things equally untempting.

The builders of the Christian steeples, those outward beacons of a religious country, so caught from the true sublime one of the chords holding mastership over the human heart and feelings, that the tottering child and the snowy-headed old man, the religionist and the scoffer, the churchman and the sectarian, alike pay the tribute of admiration to the beauty of form of the church spires built by our forefathers on principles the mechanism of which, perhaps, they cannot understand, and from feelings, which though some of them cannot possess, yet cannot but revere.

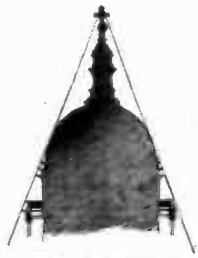
But the truth is, the myriads of these glorious outward church adornments, which told at every step the alien as he came to Europe, in this land Christ is great, now deemed useless though sublime, employed industriously and profitably that portion of our Christian population which from the want of employment now begs or tenants the workhouse and the gaol.

No object exists more sublime than the steeple of St. Peter's Church at Caen, unless it be that of St. Michael's Church at Coventry —none more sublime than St. Michael's, unless it be that of Louth—none more sublime than Louth, unless it be that of Chichester Cathedral—none more sublime than the steeple of Chichester Cathedral, unless it be that of Antwerp Cathedral—none more so than Antwerp steeple, unless it be that of Strasbourg Cathedral—none more so than Strasbourg steeple, unless it be that of Freibourg in the Breisgau—none more sublime than Freibourg steeple, unless it be that of Salisbury Cathedral, which, tapering up to heaven in beauteous proportion till it seems more lofty than it really is, appears as though it had drawn down the very angels to work over its grand and feeling simplicity the gems and embroidery of Paradise itself; and, indeed, the most gorgeous of the English florid works of architecture always retain such a peculiar character of sacredness that they always unfold a truly religious appearance.

The pyramid is Nature's own form; her mountains, the grandest of earthly masses, diminish to heaven; architectural science requires that a building to endure should end in a pointed summit: a mere heap of sand will by its own gravity assume a pyramidal form, and so endure for thousands of years, and long outlive a wall of granite reared perpendicularly.

The feeling of love for the scientific and picturesque form of the pyramid is so inherent in man, that any modern steeple which is erected, is immediately universally condemned if its outline be not strictly pyramidal, and the most illiterate, who knows not why he condemns it, is strictly correct in his condemnation.

A pyramidal outline is of such importance, that if even a dome do not conform to it, ungraceful clumsiness, and disgust to every class of beholders, are the sure results. In this may be seen the wonderful art of Wren, in proportioning the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. The cupola is placed a great distance within the tambour, so as at once to suit the particular scheme of its construction, and to form a pyramid. De Quincy says it appears very harmonious notwithstanding this peculiarity; but the truth is, that the perfection of its form emanates from this diminution. Indeed, many of the modern cupolas, built by Sir John Soane and others, being almost as large in diameter as their tambours, shew as little mastery of the picturesque as of construction, and, violating the principles of natural taste, have become so unpopular, as to have obtained for themselves the cognomen of "Pepper-boxes;" and the same title but too often applies to bad copies of the ogive domes of King's College Chapel, from their not being built with the graceful and spiring elegance of their prototypes.



Outline of St. Paul's Cupola.

The principle of the picturesque in architecture absolutely requires that if a mass have not a plain square outline, it should appear to be hewn out of an exact pyramidal or conical block.

The principle appears to have been first discovered in Egypt, and to have spread over all nations, from China to the farthest extremity of Europe.

The same principle pervades the Egyptian pyramid, the Egyptian needle, and those vast moles of masonry which ascend to an enormous elevation before the Egyptian temples: it pervades the Grecian and the Roman temple, the Athenian choragic monument, the pagoda of China, the mysterious edifices of Mexico, the temple of ancient Hindostan, the mosque and the tomb of the Moslem, and the Christian steeple.

The Greeks, whose several states were inconsiderable, and therefore incapable of raising such ample funds as powerful kingdoms like ancient Egypt or modern Britain, never erected buildings which were not small and low; most of their edifices, therefore, not breaking above the general altitude of their dwellings, they did not require that strict attention to perfect pyramidal outline which was always attended to in the lofty buildings of other nations. They made no advances whatever in the more lofty departments of science which were requisite, and which were of necessity called into use in the construction of such gigantic edifices: they contented themselves with a mere triangular façade.

Both Greeks and Romans, however, appear to have been well aware of the upward diminution requisite in order to correct the otherwise overhanging appearance of the upper part of a building, whether from optical illusion or from the projection of a cornice; hence, we find many of their finest edifices were formed with the plain faces of their architraves receding, as if to continue the upward diminution of their columns. But the proper display of sculpture in the frieze of an order in general forbade that member to recede, except in small buildings, such as the choragic monuments of Lysicrates and Thrasyllus, which were fully taken into the eye at one view. Of the following ancient buildings the faces of the architraves recede: at Athens, the Parthenon, the temples of Theseus and Erectheus, and the arch of Adrian; at Salonica, the "Incantada;" at Rome, the external and internal orders of the Pantheon, the temples of Jupiter-Tonans, the frontispiece of Nero, the reputed temple of Pallas in the forum of Nerva, the arch of Constantine, and the Ionic and Composite orders of the Coliseum; at Tivoli, the reputed Temple of Vesta: all these examples shew the possession of the same knowledge, but different degrees of skill in making use of it; and there is at Agrigentum a remarkable monument, shewn by Mr. Wilkins in his "Magna Græcia," the order, entablature, and other members of which, all converge upwardly in a very peculiar

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